

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 1946

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MONTHLY MEMO TO LOCAL PRESIDENTS

Our Forty-Ninth Birthday.

As all of you know so well, this is birthday month for parent-teacher associations everywhere. I wish it were possible for me to see how each of you will celebrate our anniversary on February 17. We know you look back to our Founders for the inspiration to carry forward the ideals on which our great organization is based. This year's observance is a very special birthday, for it marks the end of forty-nine years of growth and development. On that date we enter our Golden Jubilee year, the fiftieth in our history, and we hope it will be one of our very best.

This momentous year, culminating in a great celebration at the time of the 1947 Convention, is something to look forward to and plan for. We hope each of you will hold special celebrations in your own communities. It was impossible to give much thought to this event while all our energies were devoted to winning the war, but now we are beginning to make plans at the National level.

United Nations Organization. The best crusade on behalf of our children and youth is to *win the peace*. Let us uphold the UNO in its efforts to get started aright in the true spirit of the Charter. Do use the special issue of the *Bulletin* sent you in January. Let us have stories about how you are carrying forward the international interests we have had for the past few years.

Consumer Problems: When your president was in Washington recently, she talked to representatives of the Office of Price Administration, the Civilian Production Board, and the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, asking that more consideration be given to the great rank and file of the consumers of the country. Representatives

of several other large organizations joined in discussing the difficulties we are having in buying cotton goods, men's suits, butter, and other necessary items.

Housing. The urgent housing situation facing the country was also considered by this group. This housing shortage is not merely a result of the war; it started years ago and has been steadily increasing ever since. The government officials at the Washington meeting recommended that local P.T.A.'s seek to be represented on any community housing committees or at least work closely with them. Very often there are restrictions in local building codes that prevent the use of new materials and methods of construction in the community. They may have been put there for a good purpose years ago but are now entirely out of date.

If your community is suffering from a lack of housing, it might be a good idea to find out some of the local facts and to learn what bottlenecks exist in the supply of certain materials and skilled labor. For instance, we were told that bricks and certain sorts of iron pipe are two of the great shortages at present although there are idle brickyards and foundries in some localities. To "improve the standards of home life," we must first of all have homes, and in order to secure new homes we must understand certain things about the building industry, about labor, about shortages in materials, and about our own building codes.

Your Board of Managers voted to support the general principles of the National Housing Act of 1945 (S.1592), which is sponsored by senators of both parties and includes a wide program of both private and public investment. If you are interested, write to your senators for a copy of this bill.

1946 Convention. We are now able to make plans for a National Convention this year; it will be held in Denver, Colorado, on May 20, 21, 22. There will be three full days of meetings, and then those delegates who desire to do so will be able to arrange for sightseeing trips during the next day or two, depending on how long a trip they want to take. Some of our nation's most wonderful scenery is not far from Denver, and we hope all who attend the Convention can take time to enjoy some of it and to catch the spirit of this state "out where the West begins." Each month we hope to tell you more of our plans as they develop. This is a very difficult year to secure accommodations for a Convention, and we are most fortunate to have such a splendid host city and state. Even there, we may be a little more crowded than usual, but we have gone far enough with our planning to know we can have a very fine meeting. Will I see you there?

Minnetta A. Hastings!

President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers



A view of Denver where the 1946 National Convention will be held.

FORTY-NINE YEARS AGO



© Brown Brothers

Our early P.T.A. leaders were women like these—calm and clear eyed, dressed in clothes that now seem quaintly historic. The central figure is Mrs. Grover Cleveland, who so graciously entertained the delegates to that first Congress meeting. The others are the wives of her husband's Cabinet members.

DIAL IN ON THE BAXTERS

Saturdays—1:30 p. m., C.S.T.,
over NBC Network

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A Buenos Aires P.T.A.

In the parent-teacher association of the American Grammar and High School, Buenos Aires, Argentina, all the officers are men, with the exception of the secretary. Mrs. L. G. Bechter, past president of the Stoddard P.T.A. in Iowa Falls, Iowa, and her husband are now teaching in Buenos Aires. She writes that their meetings start at 9:30 p.m. and last until midnight! All the members are well acquainted, and each one takes a great interest in the P.T.A. programs.

NEW HONOR FOR OUR MAGAZINE

WE as parent-teacher members are well aware of what a treasure lies between the covers of the *National Parent-Teacher*, but it is gratifying to know that others, particularly an expert in judging magazines, has paid tribute to its excellence.

Of the 5,982 magazines published in the United States, our P.T.A. magazine is ONE OF A HUNDRED selected by Laura K. Martin for high school libraries. Miss Martin, chairman of the evaluation committee of the American Association of School Librarians, says the *National Parent-Teacher* is "an authoritative source of information, not only on the activities of the influential organization it represents, but about parents' problems, such as the reading, health, and social life of their families." Teachers, she declares, can make "excellent use of the reading lists and study programs in classes on child care."

"Outstanding writers contribute general articles, and moving picture reviews are candid and helpful," Miss Martin continues. "The poetry page is of high quality. A fine social attitude is apparent, one which consciously inculcates a sense of community responsibility for child welfare and civic betterment."

Local presidents and chairmen in high school associations will want to make sure that adolescents and their parents have easy access to the P.T.A. magazine. You may wish to encourage an association project to place more copies of the *National Parent-Teacher* in your school and community libraries.

Good Use for Surplus Funds

If you should happen to have more money in your P.T.A. treasury than you need for current expenses, consider placing *National Parent-Teacher: The P.T.A. Magazine* in hospital wards, library reading rooms, Sunday school libraries, Y.W.C.A.'s, Y.M.C.A.'s, and other centers that serve parents, teachers, and the youth of your community. There isn't *any better use* to which you can put your surplus funds.

J. Edgar Hoover has an article in the March issue of the *National Parent-Teacher*. Every parent-teacher leader who wants to help curb crime will want to read it. When you have finished with your copy of the March issue will you please pass it on to a neighbor or other friend? We want as many persons as possible to read this article. Thank you.



WHAT OUR CONGRESS PARENT-TEACHER GROUPS Are Doing

A Busy Year in Austin

The city council in Austin, Texas, has had a praiseworthy record of achievement this year. On every project—gifts to army hospitals, immunization clinics, organizing Den Dads' Clubs, or whatever the task—the local units in the council were more earnest and diligent than ever before.

Recognition of the importance of parent-teacher work came from the superintendent of schools, who presented at one council meeting a number of pertinent points about the cooperation of the P.T.A. and the school. At another meeting the director of the state department of public safety and the manager of the local chapter of the Red Cross spoke about accident prevention and urged members to enroll in the home safety course.

The council kept in close touch with pending legislation in Texas and relayed information to P.T.A. members. Progress was made in seeing that local theaters chose week-end movies suitable for children.

All these and many other activities were part of a busy and gratifying year for the Austin Council.

Morning Movies for Children

The Madison Council of Parents and Teachers, Madison, Wisconsin, has long been concerned about the effect of motion pictures on children. Statistics show that of all tickets sold at movie houses 19 per cent are bought by children under 12 years of age. Moreover, these youngsters remember from 60 to 90 per cent of what they see in movies, and many of them are particularly disturbed and restless after "horror" and "killer-diller" pictures.

The council earnestly believes that producers should give greater consideration to the stories that are filmed and that we parent-teacher members should make our wants known in order to help raise the standards of public taste.

During the past two years the council sponsored four or five Saturday morning movies in Madison, but this year a "Children's Theater Program" from one to three o'clock on Saturday afternoon was scheduled on a trial basis for four weeks. The results of this experiment will be recounted in a later issue of the *Bulletin*.

For the Welfare of Youth

An important project of the Hamden High School Parent-Teacher Association in New Haven, Connecticut, is the annual scholarship fund drive, which enables the unit to give financial assistance to two or three qualified seniors for their first year of college. This year a benefit movie netted more than \$600 toward the fund. Now the association hopes to establish a large permanent fund and has appointed a special chairman for this purpose. Eventually, loans may be made not only to help seniors pay their first year at college but to complete any college work that might otherwise be denied them.

At the Fathers' Night program of the Hamden P.T.A., all the business of the evening was conducted by men members. One matter under community consideration was that of increasing the seating facilities of the school football field. A previously appointed stadium committee presented plans for a new football field and, in addition, a swimming pool and an ice hockey rink. The men were extremely interested in these tangible improvements to the community and contributed many valuable suggestions for carrying out the project.

Cultural Cooperation

The Lincoln P.T.A. in Fairfield, Connecticut, has used some devices that may prove helpful to other local units.

The association has made a special effort to give the children in the community a chance to enjoy the advantages of living near New York. Their activities along this line consist of (1) a membership in the Metropolitan Opera Guild Association, which entitles the children to attend the opera; (2) a social dance group in the school at a nominal cost; and (3) supervised trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Planetarium, and other spots of interest.

Although this group is particularly fortunate in having access to the benefits of a metropolis, other associations may also be able to develop similar opportunities for cultural cooperation.

The Coulee Dam P.T.A. in the state of Washington has 104 subscribers to the *National Parent-Teacher* magazine! If your association has one hundred or more subscriptions, please let us know so that we can announce your achievement in the next issue of the *National Congress Bulletin*. Give the name of your P.T.A., the date you sent the order, and the amount of the check or money order forwarded with it.



From Grand Rapids, Michigan, comes this photograph of the committee that handled arrangements for a very successful "Back to Central" night held in the community as part of the Go-to-School campaign. The gentleman on the extreme right is P.T.A. president, and there are nine men on the executive board!

FOOD WILL HELP TO WIN THE PEACE

DURING the past few months Starvation Luncheons have been held in many cities throughout the country. They have been planned as a means of building a better understanding of the facts behind America's efforts to help all those who suffered in the war.

The menu at a Starvation Luncheon, equaling the maximum for any one citizen of liberated Europe or Asia today, may be a duplicate of the rations on which residents of the Philippines subsist—one tiny sardine, a small serving of rice, and one banana. Then, the money saved on that particular meal is used to help children and adults in allied and liberated countries.

Such an observance might be held in your community at any season of the year. Donations should be sent to one of the five groups sponsoring the idea: the Camp Fire Girls, the Girl Reserves of the Y.W.C.A., the Girl Scouts, the National Jewish Welfare Board, and the National Federation of Settlements. These agencies ask that all Americans join with them in sharing food as a continuing program that can help to build good will and help to shape a lasting peace.

ALLIED YOUTH

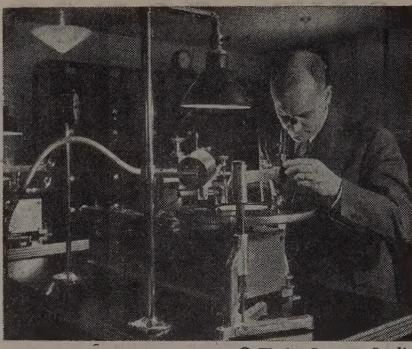
Under its program of cooperation with youth-serving agencies, the National Congress supports the aims and purposes of the Allied Youth movement. This organization combats the use of alcohol by using a positive approach showing young people the benefits of wholesome entertainment and clean play. It has been doing a commendable piece of work in the character training of our young people.

For further information about this organization write to Allied Youth, Inc., 1709 M Street N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

A Thank-You Note

At the close of the Women's Land Army program, appreciation is expressed to all those who aided this agricultural project in the years 1943-45. During these three seasons a total of more than two million women did essential war work on the farms of America.

The National Congress was represented on the National Advisory Committee of the WLA, and through our efforts many parents and teachers gave their assistance wherever possible. To each of them goes a warm, sincere thank-you from the chief of the Women's Land Army Division and all cooperating groups.



© Wesley Bowman Studio
Making a radio recording of
The Baxters.

BE A *Baxter* FAN

DO you know all the answers to training a child? Well, if you do, come right on over. We could use a little help almost any old time! But if you don't—and most of us are in *this* category—then you'll be pleased to know that you, too, can get a lot of help for just a little of your time each week.

How? By tuning in for fifteen minutes every Saturday to the Baxters, our P.T.A. radio family. They're fun and they're funny! They're entertaining as well as instructive. They're you and I and our families, and they have the answers to many of the problems that we face today.

THE PARENTS

Perhaps you already know the Baxters, but if you don't you'll want to make their acquaintance as soon as possible. You're sure to love Marge, the wife with a sense of humor—that priceless commodity all of us need. And you'll get a kick out of Bill, her well-meaning husband. With them, you'll share the joy and the worry as their three frolicksome youngsters get into and out of trouble.

THE CHILDREN

Janey is their adolescent daughter, now seventeen and a senior in high school. Bud is her brother, who has just entered his teens and high school as well; and Sandy, the baby of the family, has now reached the ripe age of five. These are the Baxter children,

HELP TO FIGHT INFLATION

masters in the art of continually presenting new problems to their parents, just as all children do.

THEIR PROBLEMS

Every time the Baxters come on the air, they try to solve one of the dilemmas that their youngsters—and probably yours as well—have to face. Since Marge and Bill are sensible parents they believe and have proved that almost any problem can be solved by cooperation. Often they get into tight spots, but they always get the right answer by the end of their visit with you.

During the war, for example, the Baxters put their heads together to resolve such typical problems as are suggested by the following program titles: "So You Can't Get into Uniform!"; "The War Bride Grows Up"; "The Major Needs of Minors"; and "Can We Hate and Conquer?" In their search for the best possible answers to these particular questions they won the affection and friendship of thousands of listeners who were faced with similar perplexities. And when they finally found the solution, they helped countless other parents likewise find out what would work with their own respective families.

Now that we have finally reached that long-awaited "postwar era," the Baxters will continue to take up the everyday problems of everyday people. For this reason, many of these matters are likely to be ones that you, too, are facing now or will be confronting in the near future.

If you are so fortunate as to have no child-rearing complications that need straightening out right now, you'll want to listen to *The Baxters* anyway, just for sheer enjoyment. And if your children are grown, don't forget that woman next door who has more troubles than the old woman in the shoe! She'd probably welcome the news about our problem-solving family, *The Baxters*.

The Baxters come on the air over NBC stations every Saturday at 1:30 p.m., Central Standard Time. Consult your local newspaper for the exact hour in your community.

Remember the dates of the 1946 National Convention—May 20, 21, and 22. And the place—Denver, Colorado. Plan to be there!